

IS-HK-E305CJ

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SITUATION IN JORDAN 19 SEPTEMBER 1970

Amman: Army positions are about the same as yesterday. They have tanks or armored cars in the streets of contested areas, but the fedayeen hold the buildings. A small armored column had penetrated east of the first circle this morning. Wahdaf refugee camp south of the city has been entered by the army and only pockets of resistance remain. The camp to the north is under artillery fire. The camps have been the main focus of fedayeen resistance. Fighting continues around the US Embassy, though not as heavily as yesterday, and Jabal Amman and Jabal Ashrafivah areas were being shelled.

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The airports: Yesterday the airports at Amman and Mafrag were held by the army but under fire from the fedayeen. We have no reports on their status today.

MORI/CDF per C03233109

Irbid: This major fedayeen stronghold has been the scene of fighting since the beginning of the month and underwent a particularly heavy assault yesterday.

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Ramtha-Dar'a: Fighting in this area has been heavy as the Jordan army seeks to block fedayeen reinforcements from Syria, which yesterday included some 50 tanks. As of this morning the Jordan army appeared to be holding at least the southern sector of Ramtha and was blocking the road with a tank force. The Iraqi army units astride the road have not intervened.

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Attached to (S memo, HK-E305a)

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[REDACTED]

The "Liberated" Area: We have seen no further references to this entity. Fighting continues throughout the area South of Irbid and west of Mafraq. Zarqa appears to be held by the army.

Local intervention: The fedayeen have been scouring the neighboring countries for reinforcements from their own ranks and for volunteers from the Syrian and Iraqi armies. Except for yesterday's sortie by tanks from Syria--and this was a "deniable" operation--there has been no move toward intervention by any neighboring state.

Ceasefire

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[REDACTED] this morning Radio Cairo broadcast appeals from Nasir to both Husayn and Arafat for a 48-hour ceasefire. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] A Baghdad broadcast almost immediately rejected Nasir's appeal on behalf of the local Palestine Resistance Organization representative. There has been no authoritative response, however, from either Husayn or Arafat.

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Soviet attitude: The Soviets have made contact with Mr. Davies here in town and with Ambassador Beam in Moscow expressing their hope that we have no intention of intervening in Jordan. The approaches have been low-key. The Soviet press is likewise taking a fairly flat approach, deploring the fighting and urging the Arabs not to give openings to the imperialists by fighting among themselves.

Cairo attitude: Egyptian newspaper and radio commentaries continue to deplore the fighting in Jordan without leaning heavily to one side or the other. Cairo's Voice of the Arabs yesterday accused Iraq of fomenting the trouble and then ducking out. Al-Ahram this morning warned against foreign intervention in Jordan and said that "only Arabs have the legitimate right to intervene."

Hostages: A PFLP spokesman in Beirut said yesterday the 54 hostages were in good condition. A senior representative of the front told the embassy yesterday the PFLP was ready to negotiate with the Red Cross for the early release of the hostages, some of whom required medical treatment. He said they were housed in areas away from the fighting. We have no information this morning on the hostages' situation or on negotiations for their release.

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